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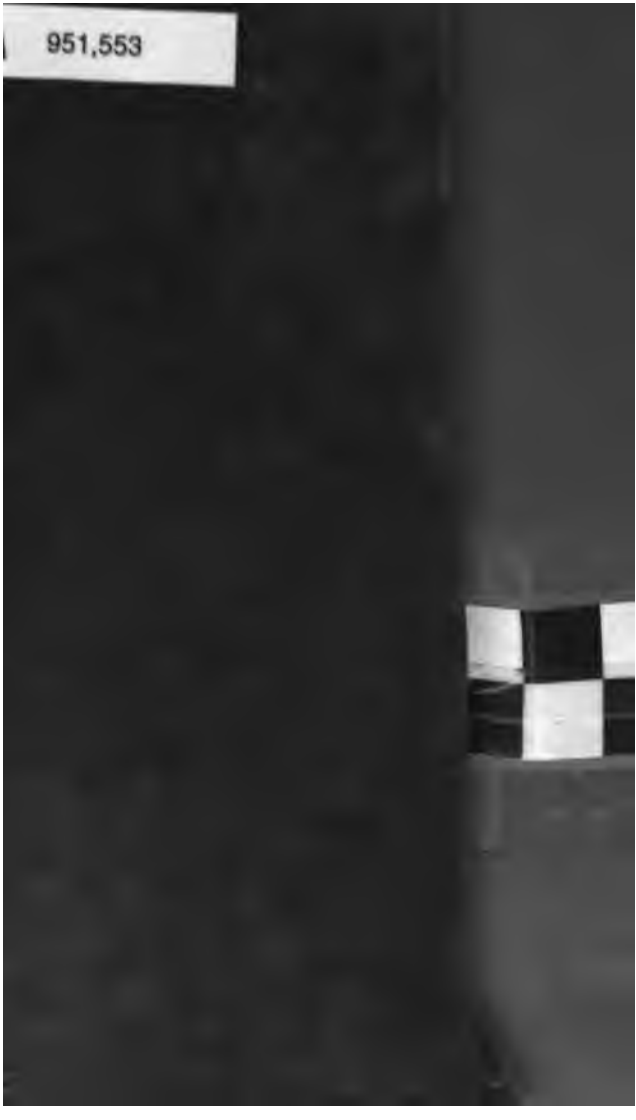
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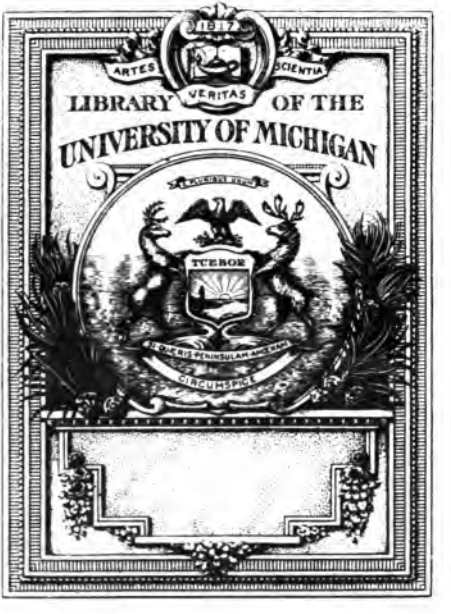
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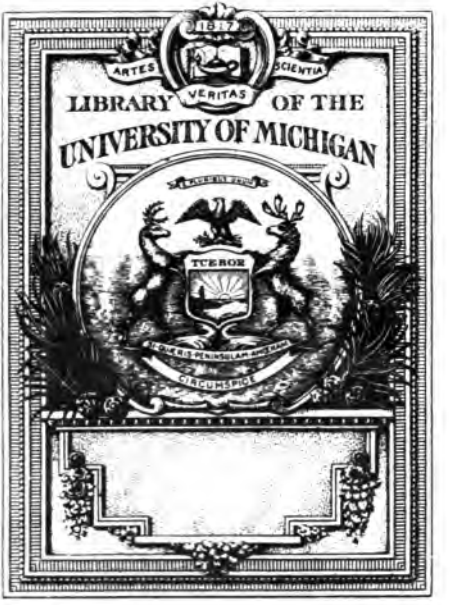
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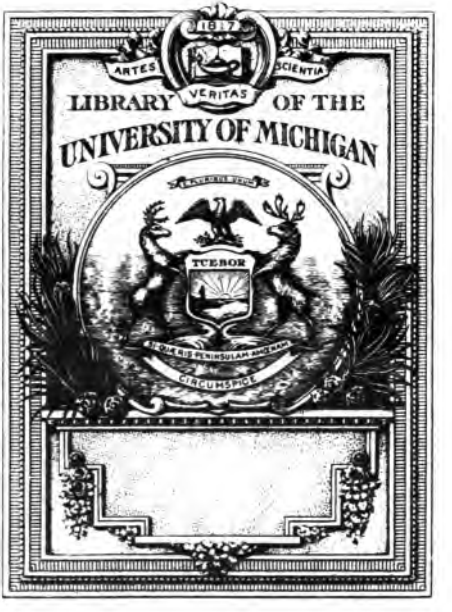
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MRS. REBEKAH EVANS.

MEMOIR

OF

MRS. REBEKAH EVANS,

OF SOUTH READING, MASS.

BOSTON:
J. HOWE, PRINTER, NO. 39, MERCHANTS ROW.
1836.

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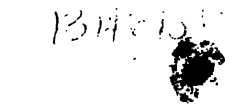
ADVERTISEMENT.

SEVERAL of the relatives and friends of Mrs. Evans expressed an earnest desire that some memorial of her character and sayings, especially her dying remarks, might be preserved for their perusal. This was the occasion of the following sketch of her life and death.



MEMOIR.

PART I.

Parentage of Mrs. Evans.—Her early thoughts on Religion; views of it after her Marriage.—Anxiety about her spiritual welfare.—Her Regeneration, and subsequent peace and comfort of mind.

Mrs. Evans was second daughter of Ebenezer and Hepzibah Smith, of Reading, (now South Reading,) Mass., and great-grand-daughter of Dea. Francis Smith, who owned, and divided among his children, a considerable tract of land, around a pond in the south part of the town, after whom this pond is now called "Smith's Pond."

The father and grandfather of Dea. Francis Smith emigrated to-

gether from England to this country, early after the Plymouth Colony, and made a settlement in Reading previous to the year 1647.

The subject of this Memoir was born August 27, 1758. In 1776 she was married to Thomas Evans, of Reading. As it is a prominent object of this biographical sketch to notice and exhibit the religious character of Mrs. Evans, here will be introduced some account of her religious exercises, taken from her recital when in the 70th year of her age, August, 1828.

"During my childhood and youth I had no very serious reflections respecting religion or my condition after death.

I attended the preaching of Mr. P., and supposed that if my general deportment was becoming, and I was chargeable with no flagrant

transgressions, my religious character and prospects were sufficiently fair.

As at that time the political condition of the country was alarming, and war with its attendant calamities either actually witnessed or daily expected, I was less inclined to the mirth and gaiety common to youth, than I might have been in other circumstances.

In my seventeenth year I was married, without ever particularly conversing with my husband respecting his or my own religious sentiments. During the first years succeeding my marriage, when I witnessed the sudden decease of a neighbor, or was myself threatened with severe disease, I occasionally had some fears, that I was not prepared for death; that all was not right in my heart, and that there

was a *something* in real religion to which I was a stranger.

I endeavored to quiet these apprehensions by recurring to my past conduct. I had wronged no person; I had discharged the duties devolving on me as a wife, a parent, and neighbor; had observed the Sabbath, attended public worship, and read the Bible.

Though such reflections were consoling, yet they did not wholly remove the misgivings of my mind, but these, with my years, rather increased, till the Autumn of 1786, when my family was visited with a fever, which I greatly feared would prove fatal to my husband.

In this day of trouble I felt the absence of the supports of true religion. I wanted an almighty friend, to whom I could go and pour out my complaints with fervor and confi-

dence, and whose aid I could invoke in this time of need. But I could not thus go to God. I found that I had unwarrantably leaned upon my husband, and doted on my children, without considering them as so many gifts bestowed on me for a season, and liable to be taken at any time by Him who gave them.

I saw myself criminal for my forgetfulness and ingratitude toward God, and felt unreconciled to his government.

I anticipated a widowed condition. Our farm was not paid for, and I should have scanty means for the support of my children. Thus my fair prospects were clouded, and I could not view the change with composure, or my feelings with approbation.

This was the first great dissatisfaction which I experienced respect-

ing my religious hopes; and this continued and increased.

My husband and children were spared. I saw that I was under great obligations to God for his goodness, but I found not in my heart to render unto him according to his benefits.

After this visitation the world never looked to me as it had before.

The doctrine of Christ, that whosoever loveth houses or lands, father or mother, wife or children, more than him, is not worthy of him, now appeared clothed with awful meaning. I saw that I was fearfully implicated; that I had made idols of my husband and children, *(Note A.)* and neglected the Saviour of sinners, and the message of the Gospel. I felt verily guilty, 'weighed in the balances and found wanting.'

These reflections oppressed my mind, and sunk my spirits.

I had few religious books except the Bible. I had once read *Bunyan's Pilgrim.* I considered it an entertaining story, but did not understand its meaning. I had occasionally heard an evangelical sermon, but was much unacquainted with what is termed *experimental preaching.*

I earnestly desired to open my mind to some pious person, who could understand my trouble, and afford me sympathy and advice. My husband was never free to converse on religion, except in a manner very general and indefinite. This reserve prevented me from disclosing my anxiety to him.

Many times I retired to my chamber, and wept in silence, while I pondered on my sad state. About

this season several of my relatives spoke of a change of mind, and new enjoyment in religion.

I heard my brother B. converse on this subject, with much interest, and thought, O that I felt as he feels!

I was told that an eccentric minister was preaching at W., who described mankind as broken earthen pitchers. I improved the first opportunity to hear him; and when he spoke of the power and sovereignty of God, that we were in *his* hand as *clay* in the hand of the *potter*, I perceived from what the story of *earthen pitchers* had originated. I believed, however, that his preaching was in accordance with the Bible; and said, truly *this* is the Gospel, we are needy and guilty, and must have a Saviour to redeem us.

As often as opportunity offered, I went to hear such preaching, and

derived instruction from it; but thought I must long and sedulously follow perusing the Scriptures, and attend meetings, thus making myself more worthy, before I should presume to go to Christ for salvation.

As was said to Adam, 'where art thou?' a voice seemed to say to me, 'soul, where art thou?' I saw myself naked, and attempted to sew together a fig-leaf righteousness, for a covering. Thus I erred; being ignorant of *Christ's* righteousness, I went about to establish my own; but not with satisfaction at my success, for I seemed to grow *worse*, while trying to grow *better*.

I had new and painful discoveries of the evil propensities of my heart, and the malignity of sin. I was spending my living on 'physicians of no value,' and my 'labor for that which satisfied not.'

I attended the preaching of Mr. S. at W. with much seriousness and interest. My great inquiry was, 'What must I do to be saved?'

One day, as I called on Mr. S. he said to me, 'should you be willing to be damned *(Note B.)* in another world, if thereby you could save ten thousand souls?'

I considered, and answered, no. I think no person can be *willing* to be forever miserable. I censured such a test of what is termed 'unconditional submission.'

Sometime after this, being in great anxiety of mind, I visited my brother B., and conversed with him on the subject of experimental religion. He said he had considered me a Christian, and asked if I did not think I had a new heart.

I answered, no; and added, that I *most* earnestly desired one, and

would, if I were able, give the world for such a possession. He replied, if you *want* it, why do you not obtain it? for it is promised,' 'ask and ye shall receive.'

At this moment something in my conscience seemed to say, 'it is because you don't *want* it,' *(Note C.)* and this suggestion was so forcible to my mind, that I seemed compelled to utter it aloud.

I returned home, greatly troubled with my answer, and could not forbear again and again interrogating myself, 'Alas! is it true that I do not in reality want a new heart?' I slept little the following night, and arose in the morning in deep sorrow.

Here the thought came to my mind, 'I will pray God to make me willing to have a new heart.' On that day, in the exercise of this prayer, I found relief and comfort

in a new and sweet reconciliation to the will and disposal of God. Thus my petition was mercifully answered, and I was made willing in the day of God's power.

I had a precious view of Christ, as the Redeemer of lost men. He appeared a most suitable Saviour, just such a one as I needed. I now regarded God's ways as all just and equal. The Gospel was to me, emphatically, the 'ministry of *reconciliation.*'

O this blessed reconciliation! I thought, I never again can be unhappy. Farewell to trouble! With the most unlimited confidence, I give myself, my family, my all to God's disposal.

It is my joy, that I am in *his* hands.

He is holy, just and good!
He will never do me wrong!

The world and every thing around *me wore* a new aspect.

This was a new *era* in the history of my mind. I certainly experienced such a change as I never had before, nor since. *(Note D.)* I was not in rapturous extacy; but I had great peace in believing, and joy unspeakable in contemplating the 'glorious Gospel of the blessed God.'

The hopes I had entertained of acceptance, on account of my good works, were all banished. I was willing to go to the Saviour as in myself unworthy, wretched, and lost, and plead, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'

The fullness and freeness of the Gospel appeared most inviting. I wanted to say to others, 'O taste and see that the Lord is good!'

This, to me, was the beginning of good days; a day, which I never remember without emotion.

The first true peace I found was in reconciliation to the will and government of God. And ever since, here, and *only* here, have I found that 'peace, which the world can neither give nor take away.' This prayer, 'thy will be done,' is, to me, the essence of true religion.

When I went out of myself, I found support and comfort.

Where I found *God*, was 'even there, where I left all the *creatures*.'

This season of comfort, was about the Autumn of 1792. I went on my way rejoicing.

In the Autumn of the next year, I buried a dear child* *(Note E.)* This was a painful test of my resignation to the divine will. But I was

* In 1813, she buried two other children; and her husband in 1814, and under each of these bereaving providences manifested the same calm submission, which she here describes.

enabled to meet it with composure. I said, the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, and I will still bless his name, and trust in his goodness.

I thought, that I would not lift my hand to recall my child from the land of silence, but would anew give up all my *other* children to God, and let him do what he will with his own.

I made a public profession of religion about the Spring of 1796.

I chose to wait some time after I received comfort to my mind, that I might have a better opportunity to observe and judge of my religious exercises.

In my relation to the Church, I recollect having mentioned, that I had supposed it a great cross to profess religion, *(Note F.)* but found it no cross at all: rather a *pleasure;* and I could add my testimony, that

the ways of wisdom were truly pleasant and peaceful.

For ten years after I found comfort, I never once doubted the reality of my conversion. But when my lameness rendered it necessary for me to hire my domestic work done, this was attended with various difficulties, which made me feel very uneasy and unreconciled to my situation. A circumstance which clouded the bright hopes, that I had uniformly entertained, respecting my religious state; and though it did not destroy, yet for a time, it weakened my confidence in the same.

In reviewing my past experience, I perceive, that my religious views at my conversion were very imperfect.

I thought that, as Christians were constantly becoming more and more holy, they would have increasing

complacency in contemplating their characters. Hence, I envied aged saints their happiness.

Since that time, I have learned much more of human depravity, *(Note G.)* and am led to reckon myself with the 'chief of sinners.' For had *I* had *their* temptations, I should probably have done as viciously.

The more I see of my own pollution and unworthiness, the more earnestly I flee to Christ, who 'taketh away the sin of the world;' and the more precious his character and salvation appear.

In the religious experience of others, which I have read, I find many feelings mentioned, which run parallel with my own.

This increases my confidence, especially when my exercises correspond with those of saints, described in Scripture.

I *know* the *Bible true*, because *I feel* it true; *(Note H.)* and though I cannot answer all objections, no argument can be offered, that will shake my faith in its veracity.

I consider myself unworthy of the great joys and glories, which are in the Gospel promised to believers; but I doubt not that through the grace of Christ, I shall possess them.

I wish to wait patiently all the days of my appointed time till my change come. And my dying hours I commit to the all-wise disposal of Him, who ever has, and ever will do all things well."

NOTES TO PART I.

Note A. page 8.

"I had made idols of my husband and children."

After her supreme affections were placed on their legitimate object, the greatest and best Being in the universe, she no more idolized her dearest friends, but maintained a constant jealousy over her heart in this respect.

Her chief concern was for their *spiritual* welfare.

She said she never asked God to give her children great personal comeliness, great wealth, or eminent stations in society; but she most fervently prayed for the salvation of

their souls, and that, however rugged their path in this world, they might be truly pious, and hereafter meet her in heaven.

Note B. page 12.

"Should you be willing to be damned in another world?"

The question of the Gospel addressed to men, is not, 'art thou willing to be damned?' but, 'wilt thou be made whole?' art thou willing to be *saved* on the plan which God hath revealed; willing to forsake thy sins, and go to heaven?

God would 'have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth;' and so commands 'all men everywhere to repent;' directs the Gospel to be preached 'to every creature,' and says, 'look unto me

and be ye saved all the ends of the earth.'

The great criminality of men consists in opposing this benevolent will of the benevolent God. They will not forsake their sins, and be saved; 'will not come to Christ, that they may have life.'

Note C. page 13.

"Something in my conscience seemed to say, 'it is because you do not want it,'" (a new heart.)

It is a common mistake with persons, who begin to be thoughtful on the subject of religion, to suppose that they wish to be Christians, and go to heaven, when they only, through fear, wish to escape the misery of transgressors, but have no relish for the holy happiness of saints.

Let such persons test their sincerity by asking themselves 'if I could set my affections on earthly things, live a life of sinful indulgence, without restraint or self-denial, and at last be happy in heaven, just as well as by now walking the straight and narrow path there, should I not prefer this broad way to heaven?'

If the honest answer be in the affirmative, it shows what the heart prefers. Such a heart does not wish to be a devout and holy heart. Such affections must have a new direction, before they can relish the purity and holiness of God and heaven.

The person whose conscience warns him that he has such a heart, should allow himself no rest in this evil condition.

But as the bitten Hebrews in the wilderness, as soon as they saw the

symptoms of disease within them, were to look to the brazen serpent; so, the convinced sinner should immediately look—not to himself, not to the prayers of the pious—but to Him who is able to 'take the stony heart out of his flesh, and give him a heart of flesh.'

Note D. page 15.

"I certainly experienced such a change, as I never had before, nor since."

Probably few pious persons can as distinctly refer to a particular day when they think they experienced that change, which in Scripture is called 'being born again,'—'delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son,' &c.; yet, the Philippian jailer and the crucified thief

could state the very day of their regeneration; and so, perhaps, could many or all of the three thousand, who were added to the disciples on the day of Pentecost.

Though the precise time of regeneration be unknown to the subject of it, it appears that there must be such a time; for, however slow may be the process in which a person's understanding is enlightened on spiritual things, his judgment convinced, and his conscience awakened, yet it seems that the work of regeneration must be instantaneous; the moment when the supreme affections of the heart are turned from some subordinate object to the great God. Hence, Christ says, 'he that is not *with* me, is *against* me,' leaving to no heart a state of *neutrality*. Every heart must be a friend or enemy of Christ.

It is quite improper for a person, who reads the religious exercises of another, to expect that his own mind will be led in *just such* a track.

The works of creation proclaim that God is a Being of wonderful variety, and no less do the Scriptures teach that 'there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God, who worketh all in all.' Probably no two minds were ever influenced precisely in the same circumstantial manner.

The question for personal examination should not be, whether we have had the *same religious experience* as another person; or whether we can determine on the *day* when we experienced a gracious change; but whether we *wish* and *strive* to be delivered from *all sin;* sins of thought, word, and deed; secret as well as open sins, and darling sins;

whether we habitually look to the Lamb of God, to take away all our sin, and habitually endeavor to keep all the known commands of God.

A test of character is contained in these words of Christ, 'Ye are my friends, if ye *do whatsoever* I command you;' 'by their fruits ye shall know them.' And if a person would have greater evidence of his Christian character, let him in these respects give greater 'diligence, to make his calling and election sure.'

Probably many pious persons mistake respecting the *time* of their regeneration, dating it from the time they first found light and comfort to their minds.

The Apostle teaches us that the *sealing* evidence of pardon often comes *after*—perhaps weeks and months, after the commencement of

true piety in the heart; '*After* that ye believed, ye were sealed,' &c.

The time of regeneration is the time when the heart first mourns and relents on account of the evil *nature* of *sin;* for it must be a '*new heart,*' to thus mourn.

But such mourning persons may have no evidence of piety. They may even see and feel themselves worse sinners than ever before. But they have this benediction and promise of Christ—'blessed are they that mourn; for they *shall be* comforted."

Note E. page 16.

"I buried a dear child."

Mrs. E. met with such vicissitudes of life, and disappointments of fond hopes, as effectually convinced her of the inconstancy of earthly delights,

and their insufficiency to afford any permanent support.

In reference to these, she most sincerely adopted and often repeated the words of the wise man,—'vanity of vanities; *all* is *vanity;*' and felt that this was emphatically true, when these uncertain and dying objects were contrasted with the unfading realities of holiness and heaven.

As expressive of her experience on this subject, and as a memento of these truths, she placed the following stanzas on the blank leaf of her Testament:—

'I've seen, at morn, a stainless sky,
A heaven as blue as beauty's eye;
But, long ere noon, destruction's form
Was riding on the whirlwind storm.

I've seen the bark with snowy sail,
Ride proudly on the swelling gale;
I've turn'd again—the mountain wave
Was wreathing o'er her coral grave.

I've seen the gay and laughing bride,
With health and splendour at her side;
I've look'd again—the wedding ring
Was wrapp'd in death's cold covering.

I've seen the hero's tyrant brow,
Environ'd with the laurel bough;
But ah! oblivion's sable pall
Has dimm'd the blooming coronal.

And such is life—a changing scene—
Its blisses "few and far between;"
To-day, the sunshine of delight—
To-morrow, wretchedness and night.

How many bards have sung of youth,
When all was novelty and truth;
And deck'd in garb of fairy dress,
Its days of light and loveliness.

Reverse the picture—time will show
Its flitting shades of joy and wo;
And though its smiles are bright to-day,
To-morrow sees them fade away.'

'O! earthly hope, how faithless is thy smile!
O! human skill, how vain thy constant toil!
How insufficient every aid below
To soothe the deep, unutterable wo!

Yet there is One, whose never-failing love
Is sent in angel-visits from above;
Whose outstretched arm, that deals the high behest,
Relaxing, folds the sufferers to his breast;
Pillows the wounded spirit softly there,
And answers, ere 'tis breathed, the mourner's prayer;
Instils this truth, the best that man can know,
That nought worth loving has its home below;
That when he takes our treasure to the sky,
'Tis but to fix th' affections there on high;
And that, of all the blessings he has given,
The first, and greatest, is the hope of heaven.'

Note F. page 17.

"I had supposed it a great cross to profess religion."

Some persons, who secretly hope that they are pious, neglect to make a public profession of religion, seemingly, lest they should take upon themselves the responsibility of supporting a Christian character, and be liable to the reproofs of their brethren, if their deportment were not

always exemplary; or lest they should feel under greater obligations to deny 'ungodliness and worldly lusts,' and to exhort their irreligious relatives and acquaintance to repentance, and a life of holiness.

But these are altogether unworthy motives, for disobeying the plain command of the Gospel.

Christ requires his followers to *publicly* avow themselves his disciples. This is one of the tests of character, which he has instituted. And those who, while they hope in his mercy, neglect this part of his explicit directions, ought to ponder well on these words of Him who will hereafter be the judge of quick and dead; 'Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me *before men*, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will

I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.'

We ought to be fearful of even a tacit or silent denial of the Lord who bought us.

If a person has some darling indulgence that his conscience tells him ought to be renounced before he makes a profession of faith in Christ, let him give up the indulgence at once, if he would not plunge his mind into darkness and despondency.

There are natural reasons why it is safer joining the people of God, than walking alone. It is easier living well with good people, and union increases strength; as a slender house, when in a block of buildings, stands much firmer than it would alone.

Persons sometimes try to persuade themselves that there is considerable

modesty, prudence, and humility, in keeping back, and not declaring themselves on the 'Lord's side,' and sirnaming themselves 'by the name of Israel.'

But they ought to be very suspicious of their prudence, or humility, while they are not conforming to the plan of God.

Their apparent prudence may be slothfulness, and their specious humility, mere guilty unbelief, and distrust of God's power or goodness.

Certainly God is able to keep, by his 'power, through faith unto salvation,' the meanest soul who meekly and penitently commits himself to his protection.

And God is much more likely to uphold a person who is endeavoring, though in the midst of fears and discouragements, to conform to his requirements, than one who is follow-

ing, however plausibly, his own inventions.

It is a part of God's system, to honor his own appointments, and to frown on the Cains, who contrive sacrifices of their own.

Note G. page 19.

"I have learned much more of human depravity."

Some persons suppose that the Scripture account of human depravity is a poetic or exaggerated description; that they have never had such evil feelings as there depicted.

But if such ungodliness has not yet been developed in them, the reason may be, because they have not yet been in circumstances and temptations which exerted sufficient influence to elicit this latent depravity; or hitherto they may have had

special, favorable restraints, of God's Spirit or Providence.

Every newspaper which brings the register of horrible deeds of iniquity, adds its testimony to the verity of that of the inspired word, concerning those who 'serve the creature more than the Creator;' whose 'feet run to evil;' who have not known the way of peace; who have 'no fear of God before their eyes;' 'whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness;' and 'out of whose hearts proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, and false witness.' For this depravity the earth is cursed.

We see the malediction in the storms and droughts, the diseases and calamities, that, from time to time, destroy the labors and the lives of men. So that the providential goodness of God on this planet

is far less conspicuous, in consequence of those judgments which the rectitude of his government seems to require him to execute, even before the "Grand Assize," when

> 'He will his justice more display,
> At the last, great rewarding day.'

Common sense, not less than Revelation, teaches us that there must be a moral change in depraved beings, before they can be happy in any world.

If apostate men were taken to heaven, then heaven would be rendered like the earth, a place of envy and deceit, of war and fighting, of ingratitude and mischief.

Hence, the Christian religion, which declares the nature and necessity of a moral renovation in man, *in order* to his introduction to a holy

heaven, is a plain, matter-of-fact system, that commends itself to our common understanding.

True religion is a simple, common-sense thing, founded on the nature of the relation existing between the Creator and his creatures.

And when one of our degenerate race obtains a just view of his polluted heart, in the light of that law which is "exceeding broad," and as pure as its spotless Author, the thrice holy Lord God, of ineffable glory, he sees as much reason as did the ancient patriarch, to 'abhor himself, and repent in dust and ashes.'

Note H. page 20.

"I *know* the Bible true, because I *feel* it true."

This reminds one of the remark *of Sir Humphrey Davy*, late Presi-

dent of the English Royal Society; 'I envy no man's intellect, genius, power, wit, or fancy; but, if I could choose what would be most delightful, and, I believe, most useful to me, I should prefer a *firm religious belief*, to every other blessing.

Such firm faith had Mrs. E. Thus the good Lord bestowed on an infirm and retired female, the favor which this distinguished philosopher regarded as the greatest blessing on earth; a belief which enables the saint to live contentedly and die happily.

The possessor of this faith is not 'carried about with every wind of doctrine,' and the cunning craftiness of men who 'lie in wait to deceive.' He feels that he occupies firm footing, and has no disposition to be lured or frightened away from his *rest.*

Though infidels should invent new sophisms, and new enthusiasts cry 'lo, here,' and 'lo, there;' though professors of Christianity should prove hypocrites or apostates, and those with whom he once 'took sweet counsel' should abandon him; though he have trials 'of cruel mockings' or fierce persecutions, for his integrity, he is neither confused nor confounded. He finds the witness of truth within himself, and *feels* that 'the foundation of God standeth sure.'

He has heard and kept the sayings of the Lord Jesus; 'hid his word in his heart;' has taken refuge in the name of Jehovah, as in 'a strong tower;' and when the rains descend, the floods come, the winds blow, and beat upon his house, it falleth not; for it is founded on a ROCK.

One of the strongest internal evidences of the truth of the Bible is its pointing out, with such surprising accuracy, the depraved appetites and passions of a wicked heart.

There seems scarcely an evil desire or a vicious habit which is not anticipated and forbidden, by some precept or example in the Bible; indicating that this sacred book was dictated by Him 'who knew what was in man.'

And here, by the way, we may see a reason why licentious men, who feel unwilling to restrain their desires and propensities, should try to invent arguments to disprove the divine authenticity of the Scriptures.

It is not strange that wicked people should 'find fault with a book that finds so much fault with them.'

But the superior excellency of the *Bible is*, that it not only describes

the great moral disease of our fallen race, but also, points to a sovereign remedy.

Well said the awaking infidel to his associates, who were about to formally commit this blessed record to the flames, "Stop! let us not burn the Bible, till we have found a *better book.*"

'Should all the forms, that men devise,
Assault my faith with treach'rous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies,
And bind the Gospel to my heart.'

PART II.

LAST YEARS, AND LAST SICKNESS, OF MRS. EVANS.

Her lameness.—Contentment with old age. Had a shock of the palsy, Feb. 1835. *Her retrospect of her life.—Second shock of palsy.—Her remarks on her sickness. Her care for others.—Her addresses to visiters.—Her views of Christ.—Her sense of mercy shown her, and her confidence in God.—Her composure in near prospect of death.—Her idea of heaven.—Last three days of her life.—Reflections.*

For the last thirty years of her life she was lame, and unable to walk without crutches.

Her lameness, which at first she regarded as a painful evil, she found a lengthening of her tranquillity; *found,* as many others have done, a

blessing in the affliction; as Cowper admirably teaches—

'Ye fearful souls, fresh courage take,
The clouds you so much dread
Are big with *mercy*, and shall break
In blessings on your head.'

She now had much leisure, which she devoted to reading, meditation, and conversing on religious subjects with her connexions, and with all who visited her.

She seemed to exhibit what Mrs. More calls 'the art of growing old gracefully;' never appeared to regret losing her youthful bloom, considering gray hairs as beautiful in their season, as auburn in theirs.

Her contentment with old age, is well expressed in the closing stanzas of the following pathetic soliloquy:

'Days of my youth, ye have glided away,
Hairs of my youth, ye are frosted and gray,
Eyes of my youth, your keen sight is no more,

Cheeks of my youth, ye are furrow'd all o'er,
Strength of my youth, all your vigor is gone,
Thoughts of my youth, your gay visions are flown.

Days of my youth, I wish not your recall,
Hairs of my youth, I'm content ye should fall,
Eyes of my youth, ye much evil have seen,
Cheeks of my youth, bath'd in tears ye have been,
Thoughts of my youth, ye have led me astray,
Strength of my youth, why lament your decay?

Days of my age, ye will shortly be past,
Pains of my age, but awhile ye can last,
Joys of my age, in true wisdom delight,
Eyes of my age, be Religion your light,
Thoughts of my age, dread ye not the cold sod,
Hopes of my age, be ye fixed on your God.'

There was nothing gloomy or austere in the character of her religion, but a contented cheerfulness, that contributed something toward recommending it, even to the gay and youthful.

She said it was most pleasant to her to talk with saints, because they could sympathise with her; still, she felt it her duty to talk to others.

For some time, her progress to her long home was like the decline of the evening sun, gently descending.

During a cold night, the twenty-fifth of February, 1835, she had a paralytic shock, which affected her right side, and somewhat impaired her speech.

In a few days she was able to converse intelligibly.

She continued enfeebled and inclined to lethargy for about five weeks, then had a second shock, which she survived about two and a half weeks.

From the time of her first shock, she felt that the hour of her departure was at hand, an hour which she had long desired; not because she was particularly weary of the world, or had unusual infirmities of age, or *had not the* comforts of life, or the

intercourse of endeared friends, but because she thought that her usefulness in the world was nearly past, and that to be with Christ in heaven, would be far better; hence, she hailed the approach of death as a welcome messenger from her heavenly Father, to call her spirit home, to mansions of rest above.

The only anxiety, which for a long time she had felt on this subject was, lest she should not patiently and properly bear the pains of dissolution.

She said, she was not afraid to be dead, but she had some apprehensions in view of protracted sickness.

For years in sickness, she had been subject to a weakness and agitation of the nerves, which she seemed unable to control, and the thought of long enduring this was painful to her.

ance, to come and see me die: God will take care of my death.

"As to my past conduct, if I should live my life again, I know not as I could do any more or better for the temporal welfare of my family, than I have done. I have exerted myself to the extent of my ability; but I mourn that I have treated the Lord so much worse than my family; that I have not praised and glorified him more, especially when he has been so gracious to me, and done all things well.

It seems to me now, as if nothing was important, but to adore and magnify the Saviour of sinners.

A view of my life as a whole, its incidents and mercies, shows more distinctly the goodness of God toward me.

"I have experienced scenes of trouble and affliction, which, at the time, it seemed as if I could not endure; but God supported me, and carried me through, and has preserved me down to old age, and crowned my days with his loving kindness, so that now I have scarcely a wish unanswered.

April 6. She had a second paralytic stroke, which affected chiefly the bowels and lower extremities; while her mental faculties seemed to receive additional clearness and vigor.

This second shock so sunk the tone of the stomach, as to prevent her taking any more food, except a little drink occasionally, during the rest of her life; she seemed like a watch, when the balance wheel is removed, running down. Though she held out much longer than was

expected; owing probably, in part, to her great tranquillity of mind.

Her symptoms were those of very speedy dissolution, and such was her pain and exhaustion, that she repeatedly thought herself dying.

This period of her life, which continued more than a fortnight, may be termed her *dying days;* and some of the thoughts and views which she expressed during them, will, for the sake of greater order, be arranged under several general heads.

It will be the object, in the following sketch, more to preserve her sentiments, than the precise words in which they were uttered, as, at the time of making memoranda, the exact phraseology could not always be recalled.

ON HER SICKNESS.

After the second attack of paralysis, instead of appearing alarmed at the progress of her disease, she remarked,—"Well, death is now coming—my life will shortly run out—all right—come death—the sooner the better—I have long waited for this scene.

"There is nothing pleasant in being sick, but I am willing to be sick, because sickness is the way to death, and death is the way to heaven.

"The distress will soon be over; God will safely, *safely* carry me through.

'Though painful at present, 'twill cease before long,
And then, O how pleasant the conqueror's song.'

"For months past I have at times had such views of the blessed Prince of Peace, and the glories of the heavenly world, that I have thought

it well worth bearing the pains of death, to enjoy these glories.

"It is laborious and painful to be sick, but not more so than I expected.

"Though the pains of my body are sufficient to destroy all happiness in any thing this world can afford, yet I have comfort, constant comfort.

"The pain I endured last week, was nothing to one hour's anguish of mind; and my mind is not only comfortable, but happy."

[She several times expressed her gratitude, that she had not now, in addition to her physical pains, to bear distress of mind and remorse of conscience, for sins long practised and unrepented of. Indeed, how can reasonable people defer repentance to an uncertain dying hour; a time when they will need the consolations of religion to support them,

and the remembrance of a godly life to comfort them, instead of having to support the tortures of a guilty conscience, and the terrors of approaching ruin?]

One day, when in severe pain, she said, —"See what a great sinner I must have been. O! I am a dreadful wicked sinner!"

"Though I have feared a long sickness much more than death, yet I am willing to bear it. Lord, as thou wilt.

"I feel as poor old Mary did, who said,—'my prayer is to go, to go, to go; *when* God calls, but not *till* then.'

"I consider it a great favor, that this shock of the palsy has not destroyed my speech, because then it would have deprived me of the privilege of giving my dying testimony

in favor of that religion which, while living, I have recommended."

She spoke also of the favor of having her reason clear, and her mind perfectly calm, in her sickness; her thoughts being just as collected as when in health.

Her memory was so strong and active, she could recall the incidents of her past life with an accuracy that surprised her attendants.

Several visiters remarked, that though at seventy-six, she exhibited nothing of second childhood or impaired intellect, more than at thirty-six.

She expressed her gratitude to God for a comfortable bed to die on, saying, "How much better this is, than to lie, as poor soldiers often do, on the field of battle, with mangled limbs, passing their last sad hours without a friend to administer even

a cup of water to relieve their anguish."

"How merciful God is to me, that I had no more pain last night. How good he is to give me all I ask for.

'Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there.' "

An attendant inquired, 'Do you feel as if you were near breathing your life out?'

"Why, I may live several hours, or I may drop away instantly. I feel so faint, it seems as if a very little would stop my breath." "Is it twelve o'clock? The forenoon has not seemed long to me. O! this joy that I feel, makes the time and the pains seem short."

"When I am in violent pain, I *cannot help* asking God to give me

a little ease, but otherwise I feel as contented on this dying bed, as with the best situation in life."

"Last night I thought I should not see to-night; now I think I may see another day."

"I fear if my pains continue long, I shall be impatient. I fear I have trusted too much in my own strength. I am always liable to err some way; but I am not to despair on this account. I have an Advocate, yes, an 'ADVOCATE with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' He will atone for my mistakes and sins."

The greatest agitation perceived in her, during her sickness, was, when after a fit of pain she feared she had not been patient under it, had been too anxious to depart speedily; but shortly after this she spoke of the comfort she felt in being quiet and patient, and entirely

reconciled to live as long as God should please.

A new medicine being offered her, she observed, she was not anxious to take medicine to protract her life, but was willing to take this, for she thought it her *duty* to endeavor to live as long as she could.

"For several years I have feared I should live so long, I should be a burden to myself and friends. Perhaps this was a wrong feeling. Perhaps I must now live till I am as willing to live as I am to die."

"I say to myself,—peace, be still, trust in God, and wait upon him; let him take his own time and way."

When one, who was about to pray with her, inquired if she had any petition in particular to present, she said, "Pray that I may *patiently bear* all God lays upon me."

True religion makes its possessor benevolent. Mrs. E. was not so absorbed in thoughts of herself as to lose concern for the health and comfort of those around her.

She asked if the watchers had refreshments set for them; mentioned that she pitied them, that they were losing their rest, and suffering those inconveniences which are unavoidable in attending on the sick. She breathed her petitions to Heaven, that they, in their sickness, might find others as kind and attentive to them, as she now did to her.

To Mrs. S. (who usually assisted in preparing her bed,) "I wish you may have God's blessing for your kindness toward me, the blessing of believing in God, that you may die in peace."

After Mrs. S. left the room, she said, "Mrs. S. has been very attentive to me—has treated me like a mother. O! I hope she will see the glory of the plan of salvation by Christ; I hope she will be interested in it."

She remarked, she was glad her son G. was not present to witness her sickness, as it might injure his health, and now she should probably get through before he would hear of it.

She repeatedly mentioned her anxiety lest her grand-daughters came too often to watch with her, and inquired after their health.

"I am some thankful, but not half so much so as I should be, for such kind attendants—so many mercies—how good God is to me!"

Her manners, in her last days, were distinguished by peculiar kindness and gentleness.

Her address to relatives and particular friends was not only tender, but often touchingly fond.

She held, retained, and pressed their hand, with an emotion and enunciation that spoke a volume of good will, and warm wishes for their welfare.

Small children were several times brought to look at her. She said, "Dear children, dear little creatures, O, that they may love and walk in the truth!"

To her grand-son, A. E.—"Do love Jesus; I *beg* of you, do love Jesus; nothing else will make you truly happy."

To her grand-daughter, Mrs. S.—"Have strong faith; this is the great *thing*. You may have as strong faith

as your cousin M. and then have as great joy. You had the mercy of knowing a Saviour in your youth,—live religion; drink deep and constantly of that blessed stream of grace, which flows without money and without price; then you will be able to tell the reason of the hope that is in you, without doubting."

To one of her children—"Talk to C. that she may not build on a wrong foundation. A false hope is worse than none. She has naturally a mild and agreeable disposition, and I fear she may mistake this for true piety."

She most affectionately and for a considerable time, held her grandson, J. S. E. by the hand, exhorting him to love Jesus and walk in the truth; to listen to the instructions of Mr. S. (the minister in S. R.) whom she believed a pious man, and one *who would* tell him plain truths.

To Mrs. W.—"If you would be more happy, you must be more *humble.* Sit at the *feet* of Jesus. I wish I had been more 'lowly in heart.' Here has been a great error of my life."

To a young lady,—"Nothing but true religion will ever make a death bed comfortable to you."

"Tell E. (one of her children absent from her,) to love the Lord Jesus;—*do* E. love the Lord Jesus—you never can be happy till you love the Lord Jesus. I fear E. is resting on a false hope. There is but one solid evidence of piety, and that is in keeping Christ's commands."

When one mentioned an old man, Mr. ——, who appeared nigh unto death, and whom she thought gave no evidence of possessing piety, she observed,—"I have nothing to boast

of above him; it is all of God's grace, that I have any good hope in his mercy."

She several times referred to the mournful condition of ungodly persons at death, who are 'driven away in their wickedness,' to whom, death is, and must be 'a melancholy day,' who are 'without God,' and have before them a prospect so dark and doleful.

This reflection led her to praise aloud the riches of God's grace, who had provided her such 'strong consolation' and 'good hope' for a dying hour.

"Tell Mr. S. to preach the truth plainly; beg of him to declare the truth faithfully, whether people will hear, or forbear."

To Mrs. S—r. "Be faithful, do your duty—there is something for

you to do—there is something for *every* one to do."

HER VIEWS OF CHRIST.

She had a clear view of the adaptation of the gospel system to the wants of man.

"Though I have been a dull scholar, I have learned one thing, the depravity of the human heart; and in proportion as my perception of the depth and breadth of this evil has been more distinct and alarming, so, my estimation of the value of a Saviour has increased."

"When I have looked within myself, and found that, 'in me, that is in my flesh, dwelt no good thing,' I have the more earnestly fled to Christ for refuge."

"Ever since I found what real religion is, I have felt it my duty to

converse with people on the glorious plan of salvation through Christ. This is the grand subject, which, these forty years, I have wished to read about, talk about, and meditate upon. O, what wisdom in God! how unsearchable are his ways, and his judgments past finding out!"

"I have long been examining my heart, to see if it would bear the Scripture test, to see if I loved father or mother, son or daughter, house or land, ease or pleasure, or any other thing, *more* than Jesus Christ, and I feel that I would let go my hold on any thing, and every thing else, sooner, than on my Redeemer."

She expressed great consolation in what is said of Christ, that 'having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the *end*.'

"How dreadfully I should feel on this dying bed, if I did not know where I was going;—if death were to me, as some have expressed it, 'a leap in the dark'—but I *do know* where I am going, I am going to the blessed Jesus—my kind, my loving, my best friend."

One morning, after lying silent for some time, she said, "Precious Saviour; blessed Jesus has wrought out and brought in a perfect righteousness, free for every one, who will come to Christ for it."

"In my Father's house are many mansions," room enough. O, that poor sinners would come to Christ—room enough. *(Note K.)*

In reference to Christ, well could she adopt the words of the Psalmist, 'my meditation of Him shall be sweet.'

Several times in her last days she repeated the couplet,

> 'All over glorious is my Lord,
> Most be beloved, and yet adored.'

She expatiated with delightful satisfaction on the sentiment of the apostle—God in Christ 'reconciling the world unto himself,' not imputing unto men (thus reconciled,) their trespasses.

"Then I shall be perfectly freed from sin, as if I had never sinned; not one of my trespasses will be reckoned against me. This will be my case, for I feel, and have long felt, that I am reconciled to God."

"I wish to be in his hands, that he may have the entire disposal of me, according to his will and pleasure; and what a glorious way of salvation is this!"

At another time she said, "I have greater views than ever of the latter-day prosperity of the Church—Christ is coming in his glory. *(Note L.)* 'O Earth, Earth, Earth, hear the word of the Lord.'"

"I feel as though the Lord was going to bestow great blessings on this land. Great revivals of true religion will take place, and men will praise the Lord more than they have done in years past."

As she spoke of the Redeemer, and the fulness and freeness of his grace, an attendant remarked, 'some persons profess to believe, that the mercy of God is such, that all mankind will be saved at death, whatever their conduct in this world.'—She replied, "I know of no Scripture evidence of this."

HER SENSE OF MERCY SHOWN HER, AND HER CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

"For two months past I have wanted to bless the Lord continually, day and night,* for his goodness and loving kindness toward me. I wish I could praise him more, much more.

"I have never experienced the same feeling before on this subject.

"I wish you would help me praise the Lord for all his benefits toward me."

"Among the mercies shown me, I reckon this one of the greatest, that so many of my descendants appear to love the Lord."

"I have no greater joy than to see my children walk in the truth."

* By the way, this is an excellent feeling to die with, as it prepares its possessor to immediately enter on the business of heaven, which is *described* to us, as praising God unceasingly.

"How many happy hours I have had in this chamber, conversing with my grand-daughters on religious subjects; hours, too, which I never anticipated."

When one told her she was exhausting herself by so much speaking, she replied, "I know it, and I am willing to wear out partly in this way."

"I feel now more wakeful and active in my mind. I suppose it is what is termed a reviving just before death, and I wish to improve it in speaking to those who call to see me, on the things of God's kingdom."

Mr. S. called on her, and inquired whether she felt comfortable in her mind, *now*.

Ans. "Why, do you think God will leave us on a *dying bed*, at the very time when we most need his help?"

[Thus expressing the sentiment of the poet:

'Begone unbelief, my Saviour is near,
And for my relief will surely appear;
For could he have taught me
To trust in his name,
And thus far have brought me,
To put me to shame?']

"Ever since I was renewed, I have desired to praise God for his goodness, and hoped that I should, even on a dying bed; and now I do feel to, and doubt not that I shall praise him in eternity."

She repeated part of the 150th Psalm. "I have thought much of this Psalm; how delightfully the Psalmist must have felt while he was penning and singing—'Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord.' O that I could praise him as his goodness and loving kindness *toward me* deserve!"

The following hymn is very expressive of her feelings at this time.

'Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me,
His loving-kindness, O how free!

He saw me ruin'd by the fall,
Yet lov'd me, notwithstanding all;
He sav'd me from my lost estate,
His loving-kindness, O how great!

Though numerous hosts of mighty foes,
Though earth and hell my way oppose,
He safely leads my soul along,
His loving-kindness, O how strong!

When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gather'd thick, and thunder'd loud,
He near my soul has always stood,
His loving-kindness, O how good!

Often I feel my sinful heart
Prone from my Jesus to depart;
But though I have him oft forgot,
His loving-kindness changes not.

Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale—
Soon all my mortal powers must fail;

O may my last expiring breath
His loving-kindness sing in death!

Then let me mount and soar away
To the bright world of endless day;
And sing, with rapture and surprise,
His loving-kindness in the skies.'

She told Dea. S. she thought he had done wrong in living such a doubting life, in not believing sufficiently in Jesus, and that if persons lived a doubting, uncomfortable life, it was their own fault.

"Some have told me, when I come to die, I should feel differently, but I feel just as I have done—the same faith and confidence in God. I believe I have the free exercise of my reason, and believe I am near death, but my faith is unshaken." *(Note M.)*

"I have no new story to tell, but the same I have told for forty years. I have no doubt that, more than

forty years since, I experienced the power of religion on my heart; though I have often mourned that I have not set a better example before my children, and lived more to the glory of Him who has done so much for me."

"During this time, I have felt the consolation of the Gospel, and find it still the same, and still I have the same opinion of it, except that it now looks to me more valuable than ever."

Dea. S. asked her if having no doubts about her condition was not a bad sign. *(Note N.)* Ans. "If it is, I cannot help it; I have none, and would you not have me confess the truth?"

Dea. S. "How do you feel about dying and leaving so many ungodly sinners in the world?" Ans. "O,

I shall leave Jesus Christ in the world."

At another time she remarked, "I feel that I have not followed a 'cunningly devised fable' in the religion I have embraced, but a solid reality."

One day, referring to her religious hope and consolation, she observed, "A thought has just come into my mind—'is not this all mere imagination?' I feel to answer, *no*. The experience of my whole life shows it is not fancy, but fact. It is the grace of God which thus enables me to die calmly. I know it is not mere fancy. I cannot fancy composure and confidence when I please. I feel peace, which I believe the world cannot give nor take away."

"I know some people may say, 'The old lady has got a whim in her *head*, and she sticks to it.' But I

have been meditating on this subject more than forty years, examined it in health and at leisure, and been gradually growing more and more confirmed in my present views, and I now have no intention of casting away my confidence. I am not going into eternity at uncertainties. I know, '*know* whom I have believed.' "

She could believe what she had not seen with literal eyes, in such a manner as to give it all the effect of reality to her mind, and thus, had that faith which is the 'substance of things hoped for.'

She referred to that Scripture, 'they that believe do enter into rest'—*do*, in the present time. She felt that she had not to wait till she arrived at heaven, before she began to enjoy something of the heavenly rest.

HER SENSE OF MERCY SHOWN HER, AND HER CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

"For two months past I have wanted to bless the Lord continually, day and night,* for his goodness and loving kindness toward me. I wish I could praise him more, much more.

"I have never experienced the same feeling before on this subject.

"I wish you would help me praise the Lord for all his benefits toward me."

"Among the mercies shown me, I reckon this one of the greatest, that so many of my descendants appear to love the Lord."

"I have no greater joy than to see my children walk in the truth."

* By the way, this is an excellent feeling to die with, as it prepares its possessor to immediately enter on the business of heaven, which is *described to us*, as praising God unceasingly.

Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever.']

One evening, an attendant, on leaving her, took her hand, and inquired how she felt.

"My best feeling is, that I feel ready to go at any moment; I am also willing to live some longer, and bear more pain, if God pleases. I am entirely willing to go or stay."

At another time she said, "I feel my feeble constitution giving way before my disease. I think I shall not hold out two days longer; but it is not for me to dictate 'times and seasons' to God. The day of my departure is wholly with him, and whether sooner or later, let it be as he pleases. God's time is the best time. He has reasons for what he does, and I have no wish to pry into

things which God chooses to keep secret."

She desired one to read to her the following hymn, as expressive of her sentiments and feelings.

Psalm lxii. 5.

'Wait, O my soul, thy Maker's will,
Tumultuous passions, all be still;
Nor let a murm'ring thought arise—
His ways are just, his counsels wise.

He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs his work, the cause conceals;
But though his methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth support his throne.

In heaven, and earth, and air, and sea,
He executes his firm decree; *(Note O.)*
And by his saints it stands confest,
That what he does is ever best.

Wait then, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before his awful seat;
And 'midst the terrors of his rod,
'Trust in a wise and gracious God.'

HER COMPOSURE IN NEAR PROSPECT OF DEATH.

Her remarkable calmness in view of her speedy dissolution seemed to banish from her, and from those around her, the usual terrors of a dying bed.

She spoke of her departure with the greatest ease and freedom, but never with lightness. She said and felt that it was 'a serious thing to die,' to enter an untried world; but still, though walking through the 'dark valley,' she feared no evil.

Indeed, such was her uniform and perfect composure, her attendants could scarcely persuade themselves that her's was a *dying bed.*

She seemed like one preparing to fall asleep. Her countenance rarely wore the aspect of pain, except at the moment of a spasm, but was often cheerful and smiling, and when

laid in her coffin, strangers remarked that she appeared thirty years younger than she was.

On speaking of the favors she had received during her life, and especially in her present sickness, she said, "I wonder God should have showed *me* so many mercies, when I was so undeserving—nothing in me worthy of his notice."

One who stood by remarked that it might be partly to exemplify his grace, and thus to induce others to take him for their portion, and trust in him forever.

She replied, "Probably this is a reason, and I wish his mercy toward me may have such an effect on all spectators."

"What a privilege it is to see how Jesus can support me in sickness and weakness. O, if I had known it before, I would not have avoided

this last sickness, if I could—all right—blessed privilege; why am *I* thus favored?"

'While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly, sweetly, sweetly there.'

When Mr. S. (the minister) was desired to pray with her, he told her that she appeared so tranquil and happy, and seemed to have every thing one could desire, he scarcely knew what to ask for on her account. She suggested that he might give thanks for God's goodness to her, and pray for a continuance of the same.

After Mr. S. left the room, she desired that he might attend her funeral, expressed her gratitude to God that he had settled in the town as a pastor, and hope that his preaching would be blessed to the conversion of souls.

She told her daughter in what drawer to find some grave clothing, which she had prepared for herself; and after giving other directions respecting her funeral, and mentioning something she wished to have done for the comfort of the family who resided in her house, she observed that she had felt it a question whether such things were not too trifling for a person in her situation to talk about; but she reflected again, that her great concerns with God were settled, she was at peace with him, and so might be allowed to notice these small affairs, as Jacob, when near death, told what he wished to have done with his bones.

[Surely, it is the dictate of wisdom, to attend to the most important things *first*, and then to smaller *ones*. *But*, alas! is it not often the

case, that when people come to die, and their conscience is awakened to do its office, they find they have only 'tithed mint, anise and cummin,' while they have neglected 'judgment, mercy, and the love of God.' And is not this the grand reason why death-beds are frequently so painful?]

As two of her children stood by her bed, she said, "Do not grieve for my death, will you? *(Note P.)* *I* am composed about it, why cannot *you* be?—you won't grieve for me, will you?"

They gave her to understand that they praised God on her behalf, had no wish to retain* her longer in this world, than it pleased God she should stay, and would try to sup-

*She had, some months previous, desired one of them not to pray that she might live longer.

press all grief at her departure, other than that instinctive sensibility at cutting tender ties of friendship, which they supposed it impossible not to feel.

"When you see me dying, do not call many people in to make a commotion, but sit quietly *(Note Q.)* around my bed—to me it will be a joyful hour."

[The Patriarch Jacob, after conversing with his children, and giving directions concerning his funeral, 'gathered up his feet into the bed and yielded up the ghost,' as though he did not regard death as formidable. And why should not all Christians die in this way, and thus honor the hopes of life and immortality beyond the grave, which the Gospel reveals and inspires, and which they profess to cherish?]

She had made it a matter of duty to bear pains with patience and fortitude, and not to be agitated about trifles. In reference to this, she wrote in the blank leaf of her Psalter,

'Lord, let me weep for nought but sin,
And after none but thee;
And then I would, O that I might,
A constant weeper be.'

A few days previous to her death, one morning about sunrising, when the winged songsters are chanting their early lays, she sung the following stanza:

'A few more rolling suns, at most,
Will land me on fair Canaan's coast,
Where I shall sing the song of grace,
Safe in my glorious Hiding Place.'

It could not be recollected that she had sung before for twenty years.

She afterwards remarked, I want to sing, I wish I could sing.

One who stood by replied, 'I doubt not you will soon be able to sing, and you may have one of those harps the Revelator speaks of, to help tune your voice in this heavenly exercise.'

'What a rapturous song,
When the glorified throng
In the spirit of harmony join!
Join all the glad choirs,
Hearts, voices, and lyres,
And the burden is, mercy divine!

Hallelujah, they cry,
To the King of the sky,
To the great everlasting I AM!
The Lamb that was slain
Now liveth again;
Hallelujah to God and the Lamb!'

She observed, "I have heard of dying persons saying that they saw angels about their bed. *(Note R.)* I see no angels about me, though the other morning some person seemed standing by me, saying,

'*Praise the Lord, praise Him, praise Him.*' "

Speaking of inscriptions which she had seen on some grave stones, she desired that no such flattering encomiums might be passed on her memory.

One present inquired of her, if it were believed to be useful to the living to record something of God's gracious dealings toward her, whether she was unwilling this should be done.

She replied, she would leave that to his judgment.

In referring to the happiness of heaven, she several times mentioned, as its greatest blessing, "There I shall be delivered from all sin—all sin—*(Note S.)* and never sin any more."

[In this, her feelings seemed to correspond with those of the Psalm-

ist, who, in his address to God says, 'I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.' The great purpose of the Gospel appears to be, to re-impress on man the lost image of God; to sanctify him, and restore him to his pristine state of purity and uprightness.]

April 20. The Monday morning previous to her death, she remarked, "All the latter part of the night I have been meditating on the lovely character of Christ, and thinking of my introduction to him, when my spirit leaves its present confinement. I hope he will smile upon me, though it seems wonderful that so glorious a Being can favorably notice such a poor creature as I; but I can give myself away to him—

'Jesus, to thy dear, faithful hands,
My naked soul I trust——' "

She asked about the appearance of Christ. One present told her that our conceptions of things in the invisible world were doubtless very imperfect, and referred her to St. John's description of the glorified Saviour, in the Apocalypse. His head and hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; his eyes were as a flame of fire, his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and he was clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girded with a golden girdle. He supposed that the human spirit, when it entered the invisible world, would be clothed in a costume fitted to its condition; as the apostle speaks of the naked spirits being 'clothed upon with their house,' covering, or habitation in the heavens; that the germ of this spiritual costume might exist in *our present* natures, as the incipient

germ of the flying insect's wing is invisible before it passes its chrysalis state, and rises to move in a new element; that probably angels conduct the young spirit, the recent inhabitant of earth, to the company of saints made perfect, to the society of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and perhaps after this, to the presence chamber, the footstool of the blessed Redeemer, whom the dying Stephen saw 'standing on the right hand of God.'

She said to her daughter, "I shall see S——n."*

Mrs. Evans, judging from several parts of Scripture, expected to know those in the world of spirits, whom she had known upon earth. And though there exempted from those natural sympathies and partialities

*A grandson, who died a few years before.

which are peculiar to this earthly and infantine state of the human mind, she supposed that acquaintance on earth, which was joined with holy friendship, might be renewed in heaven. As Paul tells his Thessalonian brethren, that they would be his 'joy and crown of rejoicing,' 'in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.' There is something delightful in the idea of again greeting those with whom we have mingled minds, labored and toiled; in remembering together 'all the way' the Lord led us through the wilderness; congratulating each other on the happy termination of fears, doubts, dangers, and troubles; and together singing the song of Moses, which was the song of triumph over potent enemies, and the 'song of the Lamb,' which is the song of purification, through the blood of

atonement. As the Revelator mentions, that the elders, in their ascriptions to the *Lamb* of God, sung, 'Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy *blood*, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation;' thus showing that they mutually knew and remembered the *nations* to which they had belonged, and the *condition* from which they had been redeemed.

Mrs. E. several times spoke of the pleasure she anticipated in meeting the ancient patriarchs, Noah, Moses, Samuel, David, Isaiah, Daniel, and others.

And, no doubt, such intercourse will constitute a part of the future felicity of the spirits of just persons made perfect. As, when on the holy mount, Moses and Elias had an interview with Christ, James, Peter, and John; these disciples thought *the society* and conversation too

good and interesting to speedily close.

Christ represents the departed spirit of Lazarus, as directly passing to the society of Abraham, the father of the faithful; and those, who have been distinguished for their strong faith on earth, may, in their future honors, more highly appreciate those sentiments of inspiration, 'blessed are they, that have not seen, and yet have believed;' and 'cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which has great recompense of reward.'

As it is in the nature of the human mind to increase in knowledge; to acquire new ideas from length of experience and reflection; spirits of saints in heaven, who have been for ages meditating on the words, and exploring the works of the great Creator, are, doubtless, now able to discourse most interestingly on their

own history, and the truths and wonders, which they have learned in the world of spirits.

When John, on the Isle of Patmos, heard the revelation of the spirit of an ancient seer, he was ready to fall down, and worship the noble Intelligence, who conversed with him; and who seemed to him like an angel of light.

This angel-like spirit, of an ancient prophet, was, perhaps, that of the devout Daniel, to whom it was said, six hundred years before, 'Thou shalt stand in thy lot at the end of the days;' and who now stood before the exiled apostle, to instruct him farther in such mysteries as were disclosed in his own prophetic visions in Chaldea.

This exalted spirit of the holy prophet, who 'kept the sayings' of God's book, found the truth of the

divine word, 'he that honoreth me I will honor.'

By the way, this account shows us, that happy spirits of our race, now in the invisible world, have noble employments as messengers of God's grace, and adds new meaning to the words of Christ concerning glorified saints, that they shall be 'equal unto the angels.'

'Who, who would live alway, away from his God;
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noon-tide of glory eternally reigns;

Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Saviour and brethren, transported to greet;
While the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul!'

She asked if she had expressed an improper, or unscriptural confidence in God, and certainty respecting her hope, the place where she was going, &c.

One present replied, that he could not say it was unscriptural, for there were Scripture examples of such confidence, and then read to her such passages as the following:

'Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.'

'We *know*, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also, that love his appearing.'

'We are *confident*, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.' And he saw no good reason

why professing Christians should be exhorted to give diligence to make their 'calling and election *sure*,' if it were impossible to arrive at any assurance and certainty respecting them.

Tuesday morning, *April* 21. She was very restless, said she thought the opium she had taken for her complaint had affected her nerves, that she did not like to feel nervous or agitated, and wished to take no more of it.

Her countenance looked more deathly than before; she had a faint turn; complained that something seemed to 'give way' in her stomach —her pulse intermitted, and the sound of her breathing altered.

"I think," said she, "I have got almost home. I feel my foundation is sure. I have been praying, *begging* the Lord for entire resignation

to his will, and feel that I have obtained it."

Before noon she was in great pain, during which she repeated—

"'Twill cease before long—'Twill cease before long—"

After a spell of silent meditation, she said, "I feel a dreadful great sinner; but God's grace is sufficient for me."

Awaking from a short slumber, she remarked, with some surprise, but no impatience, "Ah, I am still *here*—well—all right, all right."

About 12 o'clock this day, (Tuesday,) she appeared to be in her last struggle, but continued breathing till Wednesday noon; during which time, her senses probably remained, but her strength was too much exhausted to suffer her to speak, or give any signal of her feelings.

As she drew her last breath, one who stood over her said, 'Lord Jesus, receive her departing spirit to the rest and joys of thy heavenly kingdom.'

The writer had thought, that his feelings would not permit him to be present in her last moments; but such was the composure of her mind, as she walked through the dreaded 'valley,' that he seemed on more familiar and agreeable terms with death, than he ever had before.

As he closed her eye, he saw a solitary tear, which had been forced from its place by the last agony of dissolving nature, the only one he had seen during her sickness. He wiped it off, thinking, ah, it is the last of her tears we shall ever see, and the last she will ever shed; she has gone to that world, where 'God shall wipe away all tears from her

eyes'—where is 'fulness of joy' and 'pleasures forever more.'

'Let reason vainly boast her power,
To teach her chidren how to die;
The sinner, in a dying hour,
Needs more than reason can supply:
A view of Christ, the sinner's friend,
Alone can cheer him in the end.

Ah, let me die the death of those
Whom Jesus washes in his blood;
Who, on his faithfulness repose,
And know that he indeed is God.
Then round his throne we all shall meet,
And cast our crowns beneath his feet.'

If any ask, what good it does people to be true Christians, the answer is found in such a biography as the foregoing.

What system of philosophy ever produced such renovating and salutary effects on the human mind, as the genuine religion of the Bible?

Is not a religion which enables its possessor to live and die in the man-

ner above described, precisely the thing that mankind need?

To live a life of vicious indulgence, and die in remorse and terror, is evidently, to act a far meaner part, than that of brute animals; and how does this comport with the elevated constitution of Him, who was 'crowned with glory and honor,' and made Lord of this lower world?

To aim at nothing higher, than the fading, transient attainments of this life, is to leave the sublime aspirations of the immortal mind, unanswered, disappointed, and abandoned to despair.

There is but one reasonable hope of dying the death of the righteous, and that is, to live the life of the righteous.

None have a right to expect to arrive at heaven, who do not walk the way there; and he who ventures

to postpone, even for a day, attention to a subject of this magnitude and interest, does it at a peril, which words are too feeble to express, and which, he may find an eternity but long enough to bewail.

No person has a right to complain that existence is given him without his consent, since his Creator is now ready to make his existence an everlasting blessing to him, if he will act a reasonable part; and affirms on oath, that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way, and live; and since Christ has not only made salvation possible by his 'propitiation for the sins of the whole world,' but is now pouring out his 'Spirit upon *all flesh*,' saying, even to scorners who 'delight in their scorning,' 'turn *you* at my reproof; behold I will pour out my spirit unto *you*, I

will make known my words unto *you.*'

Yet, alas! how often are the secret monitions of this invisible Power, neglected and stifled through pride, and desire of sinful indulgence, till the soul is ruined by thus resisting the strivings of 'the Spirit of grace.'

The meanest individual, yea, even the 'chief of sinners,' who listens to the calls of mercy, and turns at the reproofs of God's word, Spirit, and providence, always finds a Saviour ready to pardon and receive him; thus verifying the truth of Christ's declaration, 'him, that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.'

Thus did she, whose living and dying testimony recorded in this book, is another voice, added to that 'cloud of witnesses,' that have long proclaimed—'O taste and see that

the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him.'

'Acquaint* thee, O mortal! acquaint thee with God;
And joy, like the sunshine, shall beam on thy road;
And peace, like the dew-drop, shall fall on thy head;
And sleep, like an angel, shall visit thy bed.

Acquaint thee, O mortal! acquaint thee with God;
And he shall be with thee, when fears are abroad,
Thy safeguard, in danger that threatens thy path,—
Thy joy in the valley and shadow of death.'

*Job xxii. 21.

NOTES TO PART II.

Note K. page 69.

"O THAT poor sinners would come to Christ—room enough."

Sometimes persons whose friends or consciences urge them to take care of their souls, persuade themselves that they have nothing to do; that conviction and regeneration are sovereign acts of God's power; that they can only wait till the Holy Spirit operate on their hearts, and if they are never thus operated upon, it will be their misfortune—they cannot help it.

They suppose that a person is 'struck under conviction,' as one is struck with lightning, by an influence with which he has no concern till he

feels this power irresistibly move him.

Such persons mistake the government of God, and reduce themselves to a kind of machines.

God moves the planets around in their orbits by a mechanical government; but he rules intelligent beings by a government of motives.

Hence, to rebellious men he says, 'Come now, and let us reason together'—'Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways'—'Are not my ways equal? Are not your ways unequal?'—'Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.'

And so the Apostle says, 'knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we *persuade* men'—'We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.'

As man is made a reflecting, voluntary agent, he is governed accordingly.

No man will be forced to heaven against his will; for rather than make man a mere machine, God let him fall from paradise; and so will let him fall into perdition, rather than do such violence to his constitution.

The person who sees that he is a sinner, as the Bible describes him, is already under conviction, and perhaps has been so for some time, and ought to have been converted before this.

Those who are without the straight gate, are now commanded—what? to idly loiter there? no, but—to *strive* (agonize) to enter it. 'The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence'—permitteth and requireth the greatest importunity and earnestness of those who feel themselves

lost and perishing out of it; and such violent or doubly earnest souls enter it, and are saved.

The great obstacles which oppose men's entering this gate, are, their own evil propensities and habits, their pride, unbelief, and indolence, and the influence of ungodly associates.

The moment a person sees his soul in danger, he should cry out to God the Saviour for help—'Save, Lord, or I perish,'—'God be merciful to me, a sinner'—and never cease thus begging, till he feels that he is made whole.

When a person sees that he is ruined, and unable to save himself, he should immediately believe the record God has given of his Son, that he is able and willing to save him, and then say, 'Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief,' and repent in the

deepest humility, that he did not thus believe and obey long before.

For this is the great sin of those who hear the Gospel, that they neglect the 'great salvation.' 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.' And Christ says, 'If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak (or excuse) for their sin.'

After God has prepared the way of salvation, and said, 'all things are ready,' come to the feast—'now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation;' the great sin of men consists in not immediately accepting this salvation, in making light of it, in turning to their farms, merchandise, domestic pleasures, &c.; in holding or coveting some

darling habit or object, which prevents them from giving their hearts to God.

Not that we are to suppose that any sinners are 'waiting God's time,' and ready to repent before he is ready to receive their repentance, and pardon them; this notion is all a delusion.

The first moment they thought of this subject, God had commanded 'all men every where to repent,' and he has ever since been *waiting* on *them*, and giving them 'a space for repentance'—waiting to be gracious—waiting their earnest petition for his Holy Spirit to renew and purify them.

And how distressing, at last, must be the reflections of those who find themselves in a world of misery, when they might have gone to heaven *just* as well, and much better; while

they passed their lives in framing vain excuses, died in unbelief, and awoke in eternity to remember that affecting warning of the 'faithful and true Witness,'—'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.'

Note L. page 71.

"Christ is coming in his glory."

Mrs. E. regarded various efforts, which have been made during the last half century, such as translating the Bible into different languages, sending missionaries to pagan lands, teaching children in Sabbath Schools, multiplying religious tracts and periodicals, increasing the knowledge of equal rights, suppressing intem-

perance, &c. as signal tokens that the Millenial dispensation is at hand; and as preparing the way for 'wars to cease to the ends of the earth;' and for virtue and piety to spread, till there shall be none to 'hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain.'

And, indeed, the moral movements of the present age are of no ordinary character. To behold these luminous 'signs of the times,' with indifference, seems to indicate a poor philosopher, and a worse Christian.

Not so Mrs. E. For several of her last years she had special views of the 'latter day' glory of Christ's church. These views seemed not only exhilarating, but sometimes actually enrapturing, when by vivid faith she beheld, as already present, what is yet in prospect.

She inclined to the opinion of Christ's personal and visible presence

on the earth, during, at least, a part of the next dispensation; and her feelings on this subject were well expressed in the words of the Patriarch of Uz;—'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth;'—'whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.'

'The beam that shines on Zion's hill
Shall lighten every land;
The King who reigns in Zion's towers
Shall all the world command.

All hail!—the age of crime and suffering ends,
The reign of righteousness from heaven descends;
Man, rising from the ruins of his fall,
Is one with God, and God is all in all.'

Note M. page 76.

"My faith is unshaken."

Mr. Newton justly remarks, 'I would not give a straw for that confidence which sinning does not damp.' *By referring* to page 18 it may be

seen that Mrs. Evans felt her confidence strong only in proportion as she felt an habitual reconciliation to God's will. Hence it appears that her firmness was not presumptuous.

The following may be mentioned as the bases of her 'assurance of hope,' and 'assurance of faith.'

First, she believed that God was a wonderfully great and good Being; hence, both able and willing to save her, polluted sinner as she was.

Second, she was persuaded that she felt differently from what she once did; that she now loved the Lord and his Christ, in sincerity and truth; loved to pray to him, and meditate on his holy character, and desired to be holy like him.

Third, she was conscientious in her conduct. For instance, if she thought that she ought to deliver a *painful* message of reproof or warning *to a* relative, friend, or neighbor,

instead of conferring 'with flesh and blood,' calculating on possible consequences, or waiting an uncertain, more convenient season, she made a point to do it the first opportunity. And so of other self-denying duties, she endeavored to do them *now*, instead of *to-morrow*.

This is a most important means of preserving one's 'conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.'

By temporizing, deferring, and omitting to 'take up the cross,' to do disagreeable duties, a person brings guilt upon his conscience, obscures his evidence of piety, and gives the great adversary immense advantage over him to fill his mind with perplexities and despondency.

It is a fearful thing for a person to disoblige his conscience. To neglect its admonitions is a most hazardous incivility. How can that person have confidence toward God, who is

afraid to stop in his closet long enough to hear the story his conscience has to tell him? For 'if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.'*

'No hero like the man who stands himself; who dares to meet his naked heart alone, and hears intrepid the full charge it brings—'.

If a man would not plant thorns in his dying pillow, let him beware how he stifles or neglects the remonstrances of his conscience.

Note N. page 77.

'Dea. S. asked her, if having no doubts about her condition, was not a bad sign."

* 1st John, iii. 20, 21.

She thought that some professors deceived themselves by making a kind of virtue of their doubts, as though it seemed more humble, modest and becoming, to doubt whether God was willing to save them; not considering that doubting is nearly related to disbelieving, and this the Scriptures represent as very offensive to God; disparaging his word, where he has most unequivocally declared himself able and willing to save 'to the *uttermost*,' all who come to him by Jesus Christ.

We are told that the Hebrews could not enter into the rest of Canaan, 'because of unbelief;' and we are warned to take heed lest we 'fall after the same example of unbelief.'

As a doubting life is not honorable to God, nor comfortable to the possessor, so neither does it recommend

Christianity to the infidel, who is tempted to think such an uncertain support of no great value.

The opposite extreme of a doubting life, is one of rashness and presumption.

On the plan of the Gospel, any person may be certainly saved, who 'confesses and forsakes his sins;' while, without such confession and self-denial, no man can be saved, and to hope for it, is the height of presumption.

Strong faith in God, and 'assurance of hope' in heaven, have an important influence on a person's spirits and conduct.

They give tone and vigor to effort.

The possessor of these feels that he is not laboring as uncertainly, not fighting 'as one that beateth the air;' but that he has God on his side, and shall come off conqueror.

Hence he 'girds up the loins of his mind, is sober, and hopes to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto him at the revelation of Jesus Christ.' He is likely to bear troubles with more patience, as a traveller on a journey puts up with inconveniences, consoling himself with the reflection, 'I shall soon get home.'

A man who firmly believes he is 'laying up for himself treasures in heaven,' will be more contented in unavoidable poverty in this world.

Kempis gives the following instruction, which is worthy of remembrance.

'Suppose a person deeply perplexed about the state of his soul, continually fluctuating between hope and fear, and overwhelmed with grief, were to repeatedly utter this wish: 'O that I certainly knew that

I should be able to persevere!' He might be answered thus; 'And what wouldst thou do, if this certain knowledge were bestowed upon thee? Do *now* that which thou wouldst *then* do, and rest secure of thy perseverance.' If, comforted and established by this answer, he should resign himself to the Divine disposal, his perplexity and distress would soon be removed. Instead of indulging anxious inquiries into the future condition of our soul, we should apply ourselves wholly to know what is 'the good and acceptable will of God,' as the only principle and perfection of every good work. 'Trust in the Lord, and do good,' saith the royal prophet; 'so shalt thou dwell in the land,' and be fed with the riches of his grace.

Note O. page 82.

"He executes his firm decree."

Mrs. Evans had a strong belief in the infinite knowledge and controling power of God; that nothing had, and that nothing would take place in the universe, which his wisdom and power were not amply sufficient to dispose of to his own glory, and to the happiness of all his intelligent creatures, who are willing to obey his reasonable commands, and that he would cause even 'the wrath of man to praise him,' and restrain the remainder thereof. But she had no such view of arbitrary predestination, as would lead her to forget or disregard the natural and appointed effects of obedience and disobedience.

Some persons, from superficial or misguided reflection on this subject,

are hindered from entering the kingdom of heaven, or tempted to leave all to blind fatality, or greatly perplexed and distressed about the plan and ways of God.

As to the reason why evil was suffered to enter the universe, God has not yet revealed this to us. But he has taught us the more important fact, that though there is evil, there is a way to avoid it; and here we are to begin and end our inquiries and efforts in this world.

The great decrees of God with which we are concerned, are such as these, that 'he who covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy;' that 'if thou seek the Lord, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever;' that the way of transgressors shall be hard; that whosoever

believeth in Jesus Christ 'shall have eternal life,' and that whosoever will, may 'take the water of life freely.'

The Gospel is free to be preached to 'every creature;' and there is no insincerity in its proposals. 'The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to *all men*.'—Christ is the 'propitiation for the sins of the *whole world*.'

Every person who is willing to 'strive to enter in at the straight gate,' to cut off 'right-hand' sins, and to pluck out 'right-eye' sins, to cast himself, as unworthy and lost, on the mercy of God in Christ, may be saved. But if he pursue an opposite course, he will at last find none to bear the blame of his ruin, but himself.

The Scriptures teach distinctly, that man will be judged on the common-sense principles which govern

the administration of justice in our civil courts; where no criminal is excused on the ground of being born with a thieving or mischievous constitution; or on the ground of having his behaviour influenced by any decrees of predestination or reprobation.

The great Judge, at last, will say to his disobedient creatures—'Because I have called, and ye have refused,'—because, when ye were often reproved, ye hardened your necks,—because you 'hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord,'—because, when I commanded 'all men every where to repent,' you repented not,—because you neglected my 'great salvation,'—because, when I was sick, afflicted, persecuted, and imprisoned, in the person of my disciples, you ministered not unto me; therefore, 'eat

the fruit of your own way,'—'depart from me, ye that work iniquity.'

Note P. page 87.

"Do not grieve for my death."

'When the spark of life is waning,
Weep not for me.
When the languid eye is straining,
Weep not for me.

When the feeble pulse is ceasing,
Start not at its swift decreasing,
'Tis the fetter'd soul's releasing;
Weep not for me.'

To an aged and pious person, the grave may properly appear as a quiet bed for a wearied and worn out body; a place of repose during the night preceding the resurrection morn; a friendly retreat from 'the evil to come,' the toils and difficulties incident to human life, especially to old age.

And, as God ordained among the Jews, that the timber of a leprous house should be taken down and laid aside for decomposition, so, he has appointed that our earthly house of this tabernacle, diseased as it is with the leprosy of sin, must be dissolved; dust must return to dust;—but,

'When God shall build my bones again,
He'll clothe them all afresh.'

It is no incredible thing that God should raise the dead. It is, indeed, far more probable that our existence should continue, though under some change, now it is begun, than that it should, as we are conscious it did, begin.

Some germ of our present bodies will be preserved for resurrection into that 'spiritual body,' which will be 'fashioned like Christ's glorious *body*,' and thence, forever exempted

from disease, decay, or dissolution. And though all this, to our present conceptions, may seem so wonderful, inspiration teaches us, God can as easily accomplish, as from a decayed acorn under ground, buried and forgotten, he can raise up a mighty oak.

Note Q. page 88.

"When you see me dying."

While witnessing her calmness in direct view of her dissolution, the spectator could scarcely forbear making the soliloquy,

'Tell me, my soul, can this be death!'

And could not but contrast her case with that of those sick persons whose friends fear even to hint that death may be near, lest it should alarm them, and accelerate the disease.

Her composure strikingly reminded one of the words of the Psalmist:

'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.'

Her last days were a constant reiteration of those departing words of the accomplished Addison to his step-son,—'See in what peace a Christian can die.'

The writer, as he beheld her great composure at this solemn season, recollected that, when a youth, on reading the last hours of Washington, who said to his physician, 'Doctor, I am not afraid to die,' of thinking, that was true dignity; it was worthy of the consistent character and dauntless courage of Washington; it was noble! and supposed that, beside a moral courage, it was a firmness perhaps partly acquired from his employment among scenes of danger and death.

But here he saw, not a veteran soldier, recent from the field of battle; not a brave general, chief commander of conquering armies, but an aged and feeble woman, one, unaccustomed to such scenes of hardy toil and hazard, one, from the constitution of her sex, naturally timid and retiring, and saw her too, most familiarly and placidly talking over the dread solemnities of death.

Unlike those philosophers, who, though they have very complacently triumphed over death at a *distance*, yet when *near*, have been effectually terrified and triumphed over by it, she was personally going through the cold waters of Jordan, fearing no evil, serenely giving her hand to the grim 'king of terrors,' dying, not merely resignedly, making a virtue of necessity, and meeting that with stoical fortitude which could not be

avoided, but patiently and devoutly submitting to death as God's all-wise and benevolent appointment, and with this view, dying pleasantly, cheerfully, delightfully.

He inquired, is not this the power of true religion, the legitimate effect of the Christian's hope, that enables one thus successfully to meet the 'last enemy,' to extract the sting of death and leave this 'monster' of appalling terrors a harmless messenger of peace? And seemed involuntarily to say of this 'mother in Israel,' as did the Moabitess of hers, 'Whither thou goest, I will go; where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.'

Note R. page 90.

"Dying persons saying, that they saw angels about their bed."

A few individuals seem to die triumphing in victory over death, with the hallelujahs of glorified saints and the anthems of seraphs on their tongues, while this side heaven. Seeing, like the dying Stephen, heaven already opened for their reception; going to the skies almost like the holy prophet in a 'blaze of glory.'

Although one or two Elijahs may be carried upward in a chariot of fire, saints in general are not authorized to expect such a translation.

Yet, why may not all saints, who have their reason at the time, die a similar death to that of Mrs. Evans, unless they live below their privileges? In this respect, her dying hours seemed eminently suited to be an example to beholders.

Let professors labor to deny unholy appetites and passions; to live

soberly, righteously, and godly in the world; hold daily intercourse with God in prayer; live by faith, and live for heaven; and why may not all have confidence in God, while they live, and die in this confidence, with 'full assurance of hope,' 'strong in faith, giving glory to God.'

Is not such a comfortable death worth all the care and pains it costs to secure it?

Note S. page 91.

"There I shall be delivered from all sin."

Here is a marked distinction between a worldly person and a godly person. The latter wishes, honestly and earnestly, to be delivered from the *love* of sin, as well as the *punishment* of sin, and from *all* sin; sins of *the heart,* as well as those of the life,

while the worldly person loves at least, one sin, perhaps secretly and softly, or in Scripture language,—some 'wickedness is sweet in his mouth—is spared, and hid under his tongue.'

Not that he necessarily gormandizes; perhaps fears exposure, or has too much instinct of good taste, decency, and propriety still left, for this 'sinning, as it were, with a cart rope.' As the fashionable Chesterfield says,—'If he is so *unfortunate* as to have vices, he indulges them in *secret*, like a *gentleman*'!!

Indulges at least in covetous, avaricious, proud, envious, or revengeful thoughts; or vain and wanton imaginations. Not considering, that he who allows himself in vain and vile thoughts, is but one step from vain and vile acts; and of such a one it may be truly said, not only that

there is but 'a step between him and death;' but worse than this, that there is but a step between him and damnation.

Note, page 94.

"Whom the dying Stephen saw."

Stephen said, 'Behold I see the heavens opened.'*

Christ intimates that good angels who attend on saints in this world have an open view of heaven: 'I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.'

As persons who have been blind all their lives, from their eyelids being grown together, on having these separated have suddenly perceived a world of wonders in the

* Acts vii. 56.

objects around them, and especially in the firmament above them, so the Creator, when he pleases, can open to a mortal being such a view of spiritual and previously invisible things, as both to astonish and enrapture him.

The Apostle Paul was not certain that his mind left his body, when he seemed 'caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it was not lawful (or possible) for a man to utter.'

The well known account of Rev. Wm. Tennent, of Freehold, N. J. seems one of those modern occurrences which serve to keep up a more sensible acquaintance with the invisible world, which is so closely curtained from our ordinary view.

Mr. Tennent, after apparently dying, and remaining as a corpse for three days, revived, and related

some of the views which he had during this singular suspension of animal life. He said that in an instant he found himself in another state of existence; the three days seemed to him not more than ten or twenty minutes; the ravishing sounds of the songs and hallelujahs which he heard were rarely out of his waking thoughts for years afterwards; that all the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them, appeared in his estimation as nothing, and vanity; and that, 'could he have had the world for stooping down for it, he believed he should not have thought of doing it.'

How inconsiderable and transitory are the toils and vexations of this primary-school state of existence, compared with the honors and glories of the 'world to come;' 'while we look not at the things which are